



ARIZONA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH SERVICES

Division of Environmental Health Services

BRUCE BABBITT, Governor

SUZANNE DANDOLY, M.D., M.P.H., Director

November 8, 1979

Certified Mail

SFUND RECORDS CTR
2390589

Mr. Charles K. Luster, Mesa City Manager
Mr. Tim Bray, Acting Scottsdale City Manager
Mr. Kenneth A. McDonald, Tempe City Manager

Re: Tri-City Landfill

Dear Sirs:

On August 31, 1979, I wrote to Mr. Herschel Andrews, President of the Pima-Maricopa Indian Community, regarding the Tri-City landfill. A copy of my letter was forwarded to each of you. As you may recall, I requested that the Tribe contact me to arrange a joint inspection of the landfill and a meeting to evaluate environmental problems at the site.

Despite numerous phone calls from me requesting a response, the Tribe has still not contacted us with a definite date for an inspection and meeting. In the absence of an inspection, we will be forced to evaluate the Tri-City site solely on the basis of information currently on hand. That information indicates to us that the site is unsuitable as a location for refuse disposal due to the high potential for inundation and washout by the Salt River, and the possibility of leachate contamination of groundwater. All current indications are that the landfill presents a severe threat to ground and surface water quality, both on and off the reservation. Our information also suggests that open burning has occurred at the site, and that waste haulers are dumping hazardous materials there.

The above-described information suggests two options for the three cities using the Tri-City site:

1. Discontinuation of refuse disposal at the site, and closure, with adequate measures to protect against washout of the finished fill;
2. Continued use of the site with construction of dikes, liners, and other protective devices to prevent water pollution. The second option is viable only if studies by engineers and hydrogeologists show that protective measures are in fact feasible, and that such measures would prevent any environmental degradation from further operation of the site. We would also require that representatives of this Department be permitted to conduct routine inspections at any site you use for refuse disposal.

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Regardless of which option you choose, studies should be undertaken to assess the environmental impact of existing landfill operations at Tri-City. Such studies should include: (1) installation of groundwater monitoring wells around the site and testing of such wells to check for possible contamination from landfill leachate; and (2) an assessment of the quantity, concentration and nature of hazardous wastes at the site.

Unless effective measures approved by this Department are commenced within 45 days to eliminate the environmental threats presented by this landfill, we will be forced to take appropriate action to abate those threats. Such action would include the disapproval of all proposed subdivisions that designate the Tri-City landfill as the place for refuse disposal. We hope that such action will be unnecessary, and remain ready to meet with the Tribe and representatives of the three cities to inspect the site and discuss possible solutions.

Please advise me within fifteen days of your plans to deal with this matter.

Very truly yours,

ORIGINAL SIGNED BY:

R. BRUCE SCOTT

R. Bruce Scott, P.E.
Assistant Director

RBS:mb

cc: Honorable Herschel Andrews, President
Pima-Maricopa Indian Community

Dr. Lynn Wallace
Indian Health Service

Clinton M. Pattea, Executive Secretary
Arizona Commission of Indian Affairs

Honorable Barbara vonAmmon, Mayor
Town of Paradise Valley

Harry Seraydarian, Chief
Hazardous Materials Section, USEPA, Region IX

Mr. Ted Williams, Deputy Director

✓ David S. Baron, Esq.

Barry Abbott

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